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REDEMPTION;

A

SACRED POEM.

WITH NOTES,

DOCTRINAL, MORAL, AND PHILOSOPHICAL,

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REDEMPTION:

A SACRED POEM.

PREFACE.

AMONGST the number of excellent Poets, of which this country can boast, it is to be lamented that there are so few who have employed their pen on sacred subjects. Redemption, the noblest work of God, has scarcely been noticed, while the warlike atchievements of heroes, who have laid waste kingdoms, and butchered millions of their fellow-creatures, or the charms of love and wine, have been the favorite themes of the Muses in all ages.

To rescue, if possible, this *ne plus ultra* of divine wisdom and goodness from the almost total oblivion into which it has fallen, is the design of this Poem. Fashion, though it forbids to be acquainted with the Bible, is not, I believe, at enmity with poetry, even though it assume a religious dress. In this book I have described, at some length, the Creation. In the next (which will be published by Midsummer, and continued regularly every three months) I shall proceed

to the fall, and then go on to the birth of our Saviour, paraphrasing the miracles wrought, and doctrines delivered by him, interspersed with such reflections as the occasion naturally gives birth to.

I have adopted the opinion of the late learned Dr. WATTS, who objects to the sameness of numbers in all the Epic Poems; and have, in pursuance of his recommendation, introduced the Lyric Ode; the numbers of that species of poetry being more musical and various, it seems better adapted for hymns, either of thanksgiving or lamentation, than the uniformity of the heroic verse.

I have added several notes in support of the doctrines herein advanced, deduced both from reason and revelation. Revelation, though it soars far above reason, never contradicts it; arguments, therefore, drawn from mere unenlightened reason cannot be altogether useless, since the only objections that have been urged against Christianity, by its most inveterate enemies, are merely on a supposition of its irrationality.

REDEMPTION;

A SACRED POEM.

BOOK THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed—Invocation of divine assistance—Description of the creation—Creation of Adam—Adam appointed sovereign of the world—The tree of knowledge forbidden—Creation of Eve—God blesses our first parents—Angels song at the creation—Speeches of Adam and Eve—Comparison between the pleasures of the world, and virtuous love—A prayer.

OF that vast work, which from the first of time
Employ'd the Great JEHOVAH's mighty mind
To save us men from that tremendous fate,
That second death of never ending woe,
Which, by the just decree of righteous heaven,
Far from the Elysian mansions of delight
Where with the Angelic host the Godhead dwells,
Had hurled us down to that dark, drear abode,
Where the Archrebel groaning clanks his chain,
Just punishment for guilt like ours! I sing.

Almighty Father! Who didst erst attune
To heavenly strains the lips of Jesse's son,
Like his inspire my lays! And may my verse
In glorious numbers flow, while I declare
How from his throne of light ineffable
The Patron God* descending, deigned to dwell
On this low earthly ball; and, Infinite
Humility! All human or seraphic
Thought how far surpassing! Look upon Himself
Our humble garb of clay. For us became
A perfect man: our equal, and our God!
Nor stopped he here. A willing Victim led
On Calvary he poured his spotless soul,
And trod for us the gloomy vale of death.
God died, that Man might live! Amazing Truth!
All other Truths compared with this, how small,
How undeserving to be known! All other
Miracles to this how unmiraculous!
For us He burst the iron bars of death,
Tore from the vanquished grave its hell doomed prey.
Threw wide the gates of everlasting bliss,
And on the right hand of the Father sits,
Making sweet intercession for our crimes,
And pleading His own merits, as a full

* Jesus Christ.

Atonement for that heavy load of guilt,
That plunged in endless pain the human race.
When the eternal rising in his might,
Rolled from his ample hand these glorious orbs
That range the spacious firmament, and called
Forth matter out of nothing; and with all
That could or please the eye, or charm the ear,
Or gratify each wish the heart can form
Abundantly endowed them; gave the word,
And straight obedient to the high command
Arose the feathered and the scaly tribes,
Peopling the air and water. Nor was earth
Left desolate; a numerous race arose
To crop the flowery lawn. The lust of blood
Was then unknown, (1) for in the happy days
Of innocence all lived in harmony,
Nor fell the weak a victim to the strong,
As yet however was no creature found,
To whom the sceptre might be justly given
To rule a subject world. Nor had the Lord
As yet bestowed a soul replete with powers
To comprehend the whole creative plan,
To sing his Maker's praise, and glow with love
And gratitude for such unbounded gifts.
And which might here mature, and grow to that
Exalted height of virtue, as to fill

With honor those sublime etherial thrones
From whence the rebel angels fell. (2) Therefore
To those pure spirits who before Him stand,
And minister in all things to His will,
Thus the Almighty spake. " Our eyes have seen
" All that our hands have wrought, and it is good.
" Our earth is cloathed in verdant green, and decked
" With every varying flower of thousand dies.
" With towering trees, whose lofty tops appear
" To rend the cloven skies. With hills, and dales
" Through which the glassy brooks meandring flow,
" Reflecting to th' astonished gazer's view
" Another heaven beneath his feet; through whose
" Transparent stream, their silver scales
" The finny nations to our sun reflect,
" Of more than diamond splendor. Lo our sea,
" In which Leviathan of size immense
" Can roll his ponderous bulk. Attentive to
" The welfare of our creatures, willing that
" They enjoy the full extent of perfect
" Happiness, we have anticipated
" Each want, and each desire. Exhausted fancy
" Racks her inventive thought, and laboring rolls
" Her eagle eye around, above, below,
" In vain. A single pleasure is not found
" But what she has the means to gratify.

" Now will we crown our work, and Man create
" In our own Image, (2) here to dwell awhile
" That we may prove his virtue, ere we give
" Possession of the throne by Satan filled.
" Lest bold rebellion should again uprear
" Her daring head, and (impotent attempt)
" Again disturb the harmony of heaven,
" And fill with raging war the realms of peace.
" His trial o'er, his merited reward
" Shall straightway be bestowed ; and in a car
" Of fire etherial to our presence born,
" The Angel Man translated, shall before
" Us stand, immortal, and divine. Our world
" Is finished, fitted to receive our Son.
" Adam, attend ! Obey our voice. Arise."

JEHOVAH spake, and straight the obedient earth
Self-moulded into human shape, became
Flesh, blood, bone, artery. A breath went forth
From the Creator's mouth, and instant Man
Became a living Soul, and walked erect,
His eye full fixed on heaven ; to denote
The grandeur of his nature, and that all
His thoughts, and aims, and wishes, should be raised
To yon bright azure skies, the meet abode
Of an Immortal spirit. And that this,
His transient habitation, only claims

A secondary care, and ever ought
To bend to his Eternal Interest.
Straightway around their Godlike master Man
The subject creatures flocked, and each one passed
In due array before him, while he gave
To each his separate name. The wolf and fawn,
The dove and eagle wanton gambols played
In sportive innocence. The serpent, (yet
Devoid of guile) his scales of burnished gold
Full to the sun's meridian rays displayed,
And seemed a flame of fire, and twined around
In graceful folds the unoffending lamb.
But when he first the bowers of Eden saw, (3)
What gratitude and admiration rushed
On his astonished soul. How glowed his heart
With love to that All-gracious Power, who gave
All this to him, without hope, without
A possibility of a return.
Around his feet in virgin white arrayed
The humble snow-drop reared her drooping head.
The blushing rose diffused her fragrance round,
And breathed through all the air her rich perfume.
The woodbine and the jassamine interwove
Formed a delightful arbour; while the grape
In purple clusters hanging, seemed to invite
To taste its luscious juice. The downy peach,

And grateful pine, innumerably spread
Around, proffered their plenteous stores. Each flower,
And herb, and shrub, and fruit, and tree was found
In this heaven-planted spot. Their songs of praise
Ten thousand feathered warblers raised to Him
Who tuned their little throats. At day's first dawn
The soaring skylark, pealed his matin lay,
And at the dewy hour of eve, the strain
Of Philomel reechoed through the grove.
Sweet! melancholy! widowed Songstress! hail!
Still in my ravished ears thy plaints renew,
And still repeat thy tender tale of woe.

" Adam," said the benignant Lord of all,
" To thee I give this beauteous world; (faint type)
" Of that beatic kingdom, where with Me
" If thou continue virtuous, thou shall soon
" A pure and disembodied spirit dwell.
" And for thy more peculiar residence
" This garden I have planted. Here the growth
" Of every varying clime from pole to pole
" Spontaneous rises from the teeming earth.
" Here to the sweetness of the flowering Spring,
" Is joined the glowing Summer's ardent strength,
" And the rich ripeness of Autumnal age.
" All things which I have made to thy command
" Do I submit. Reign thou o'er all supreme,

" The heaven-appointed Lord of all below.
" Of every grateful fruit, and every herb
" Thy longing soul desireth, freely eat,
" Save only of the Tree of Knowledge. That
" I withhold from thee, and that alone. (Small
" Proof of thy obedience.) From that be sure
" To abstain, for in the day thou eat'st thereof
" To certain death thou shall become a prey." (4)
But though in Paradise for every sense
More than enough to gratify was found,
His joyless days in pining solitude
Lone man had passed. Formed for society,
For love's soft converse, and for mutual bliss
Imparted, and imparting: all had lost
Its relish, insulated happiness
Had ne'er been found. Without a friend to whom
He might communicate his thoughts, sweet speech
Was given in vain. The All-bestowing God
A meet companion therefore called to birth,
Equal (5) in all endowments to himself,
Differing in sex, of fairer, gentler frame;
And her bestowed on man to be his wife;
More than redoubling the redoubled bliss.
A deathlike slumber stretched its leaden wings
O'er Adam's eyes, and all his senses sealed
In blank oblivion. From his side the rib

Nearest his heart (6) th' Almighty took, to shew
The close connection, and endearing tye
Of heaven-descended marriage. Once again
The All-creating mandate issued forth,
And instantly the rib enlarged its size,
And grew to perfect stature. Loveliest work
Of heaven! The last, and greatest of the gifts
Of God! In what exact progression all
The works of Nature rise! From dreary nought
First came brute matter in confusion dark,
Of elemental chaos. Then in due
Order ranged, earth, air, fire, water to
Their several stations flew. The vegitative
Sap swift through a thousand porous fibres moved,
And gave inanimate creation birth.
Then rose in various garbs of earth arrayed,
Of different shapes and natures, all the tribes
Innumerous of locomotive life.
Majestic man then bore aloft his brow,
Monarch of all, and at the sixth day's close,
Resplendent Eve the fair creation crowned.
But if the General Sire such wonder felt
Distend his grateful breast, when he beheld
Mere earthly Paradise; what joy supreme!
What ravishment! and transport infinite
Thrilled through each trembling nerve; when at one view

The every charm of his All-perfect bride,
Burst in full blaze on his enraptured sight!
No fabled Venus then before him stood
Such as Apelles breathing canvas feigned.
No Medicean statue then displayed
Her well turned limbs, pride of the sculptor's art.
Had these been there no single thought, not even
The slightest glance had been on them bestowed;
Their faded beauties they'd not dared to have shewn,
But to a humble distance far withdrawn,
Veiled in dim darkness their diminished heads.
These were the boasts of men, but Eve of God.
Her auburn hair in graceful ringlets played
O'er her fair forehead, and in flowing curls
Hung on her shoulders to her taper waist.
Commixed with azure in her downcast eye,
Sparkled Golgonda's diamond, softened with
The mild effulgence of the silver moon.
Light on her cheek, of more than snowy white,
Bloomed the rich radiance of the blushing rose.
Her smiling lips, to which the coral's red
Beamed pale, just opening, gave to view her teeth
Of polished ivory. Her swelling breasts,
In which the light blue veins meandring shone
Through her transparent skin.---But stay, rash pen!
Nor dare presumptuously attempt to paint

Those beauties thou hast never seen, and which
Thy boldest fancy never can conceive.
By all the power of innocence upborn,
With all the strength bestowed by bounteous heaven
On guiltless man; even Adam could not look,
(Though used to view the splendid sight of bliss
In his heaven-planted Eden) He, even he
Could not attentively survey this last
Great master-piece of God: His dazzled eyes,
Dim with excessive lustre, seemed as if
His senses they deceived; as if the form
Was but a fleeting vision of the night,
The effusion of a sleep-enchanted brain.
Nor felt the bosom of the blushing bride
Sensations different: Her every wish
Was fixed on Adam; nor a joy her soul
Could find, divided from her destined mate.
Love, such as in the breast of Seraphs glows
Allumed its purest torch, and in the hearts
Of this celestial pair its altar raised.
The UNIVERSAL SPIRIT, pleased, beheld
Their mutual transports, and sweet smiling blest
The render tye, by which He now designed
To link for ever their united fates.
"Adam," said he, "behold thy spotless wife,
"In pure unsullied innocence arrayed;

" Her I bestow on thee, and in her give
" The greatest blessing thou on earth canst bear.
" Soaring above a certain height, all joy
" Is turned to torment, and becomes too keen,
" Too exquisite to be endured. And thou
" Fair Eve! behold thy fated spouse. From him
" Shall flow in a perpetual stream thy All-
" Consummate happiness. Together live,
" Each other blessing, by each other blest.
" Nor when translated to the etherial realms
" Of incorporeal being, shall the bands
" By which ye are united be destroyed. (7)
" Still shall your kindred souls be turned in one,
" One common anthem from your lips shall rise,
" As hand in hand ye kneel before the throne.
" Soon shall an infant cherub at the breast
" Of his fond mother hang. A new delight,
" Different, but almost equal unto that
" Ye yield each other, shall your hearts distend,
" As on the smiling babe ye raptured look,
" And see, as in a mirror to your view
" Reflected, either parents opening grace.
" Be yours the glorious task to form his mind
" To manly virtue, and prepare him for
" The vacant crown to which he is ordained."

The Eternal ceased; when straight a blaze of light

Flaming celestial crimson through the skies
Burst on their view. Ten thousand thousand of
The Angelic Host, sweeping their sounding harps
Loud hymns of praise to their Creator sung,
Fanning the fragrant air with balmy wings.
Glory to Thee! the All-productive God!
Whose powerful mandate gave creation birth;
Whose spacious heavens and fertile earth
Came forth, obedient to Thine awful nod.
Loud Hosannahs Angels sing
To your everliving King.
Holy songs of grateful praise
Joined with ours O mortals raise.
Vital heat bestowing sun,
Orient-pearl-effulgent moon,
Rolling billows of the main,
Verdant grass enamelled plain,
Tune to the mighty God your ravished voice,
JEHOVAH reigns supreme! In His great name rejoice.
Thou Virgin Mother of the human race!
And thou! of radient cherubim the Sire!
In pealing anthems chaunt eternal grace,
As to the fiery throne your lays aspire.
Immortal mortals! Hail!
Earth-born inhabitants of heaven! All hail!

In hideous groans hear hell bewail
Its every hope
Extinguished in interminable night.
Howl from the black abyss ye Demons! Howl!
Lo how their haggard eye-balls ghastly roll!
As full on their tormented sight
Creation bursts, intolerably bright.
Behold a flaming Seraph from on high
On golden wing descending cleaves the air,
Swift o'er the trembling strings his fingers fly,
And joined to his resounding lyre
Swells the full chorus of the heavenly choir.
Glory to Thee unfathomable Lord!
Stupendous sea of bliss where Angels bathe!
Spirit immense! Great co-eternal word!
To Thee the songs inspired by Thee we raise.
In ceaseless shouts high heaven re-echoing rings,
Loud hallelujahs to the King of Kings.
The general parents mute with wonder stood,
Fearful of breathing, lest they should disturb
The warblings of the intellectual host.
They seemed to doubt if it was real: it
Appeared to be mere phantasy. He first
The sacred silence broke, and to his bride
In accents of astonishment thus spoke.
"How great! how good! is that transcendant Power,

" Who from beneath the dust whereon we tread,
" From ghastly nothing called us into life!
" And with a never dying soul, a ray,
" An emanation of Himself illumed
" Our mortal frames! Immortal life he gave,
" While yet no life was ours! And what return
" For these immeasurable gifts, can we
" Or make to Him, or He from us receive?
" None! None! Our debt we never can discharge.
" What is the duty He requires from us?
" Solely to enjoy the blessings he bestows,
" And take our fill of happniess. How soon
" Does He design, when we have fathomed all
" The depths of earthly pleasure, to shower down
" In a full stream the exuberant delights
" Of that pure kingdom, where unfolding all
" His glories to our view, He to our sight
" Shall visible appear! To His high throne
" In infinite progression we shall soar,
" Ever approaching, never drawing near!
" The more of Him we comprehend, the more
" Incomprehensible will He appear.
" Each moment shall a new delight afford
" More exquisite than any felt before:
" And as our power of bearing happiness
" Increases, with it also shall increase

" The means to gratify the novel strength,
" Glows not thy heart, O Eve with gratitude
" Like mine, for these spontaneous bounties ?"
Swift o'er her beauteous cheek in softest tints
His downy bloom the peach light shading spread,
While in a voice, to which the breathing flute,
Or warbling notes of Philomel are harsh,
Thus to the partner of her soul she said.
" Nor in my bosom burns the sacred flame
" Of gratitude with fervor less than thine.
" I feel His boundless goodness, and in Thee
" Mine eyes behold His image. When I look
" On Thee, I feel a thrilling pain, of joy
" Superlatively great : Sweeter, but not
" So noble, so majestically grand,
" As when the present Deity himself
" My every laboring faculty sublimes.
" But yet, from Thee to Him my raptured thought
" Incessant rises, nor ever do I taste
" With such exalted transport all His love
" To me displayed, as when I first begin
" By contemplating Thee. Then soon my mind
" In swift gradation lifts itself to Him,
" And then the great Incomprehensible
" Appears far greater to my soul, than when
" My meditation is of Him alone.

" But come beloved spouse, let us obey
" The bidding of this Great PHILANTHROPIST.
" Let us with anthems of thanksgiving cull
" The choicest fruits from every varying tree.
" Nought can be wanting in this blest abode
" To gratify each wish, and each delight
" Nature can ask for. In yon thick alcove
" Of fragrant limes and orange-trees, we'll eat
" The frugal meal of innocence and health,
" Safe from the rays of the meridian sun.
" There on the verdant moss reclined, we'll spread
" In simple luxury our fruitful store.
" The gaudy tulip proudly there displays
" The every colour of the flowery tube.
" The violet and spicy balm combine
" Their odorous incense, and their rich perfume
" Fanned by the cooling breezes fills the air.
" Close at our feet a babling brook his rill
" Of liquid chrystal pours, to slake our thirst,
" And guggling murmurs o'er the yellow sand.
" And when the setting sun withdraws his rays,
" And streaks with burnished gold the Western sky,
" In yonder grot our light repose we'll take,
" Safe in each others arms. The damask rose
" Shall strew our downy couch, and ere the lark
" Carols his matin lay we will arise,

" And in an Holy Hymn anticipate
" The soaring herald of the Orient morn.
She said, and with a tender smile of love
Her snowy arms around her Adam threw,
And kissed his manly cheek, whereon the glow
Of rosy health appeared in youthful pride.
Her fond embrace with equal ardour he
Returned, and felt new joy his grateful soul
Distend, to find the beauties of her form
As meet, the types of an all-perfect mind.
Hail! Holy, heaven appointed wedlock! Hail!
How soft the silken fetters of delight
In which indissolubly bound, two hearts
Intwined in one a heaven find below.
Frequent the trembling eye with liquid pearl
O'er glows, as on the other fixed, a joy
Too exquisite for sufferance it feels.
O ye! who in the devious giddy whirl
Of what the world calls pleasure madly run.
Unhappy ye! who solitary tread
The dreary Vale of Life without a friend.
Say, can or wealth, or title, or applause
Of kings or multitudes your soul defend
From lassitude, and carking discontent.
Though to the dregs you drink the o'er flowing cup
Of all propitious fortune: though desire

Follows, not leads enjoyment: what though nor
The summer's heat, or northern winter's cold
Oppress your languid limbs: though every land
Caters, to lead with each luxurious dish
Your groaning table: ought of happiness
Do you ere find? You know not what it is.
The intoxicating madness of an hour
Is all of joy you taste. Nor is it joy.
True joy consists in reason: attribute divine!
Bestowed by God on man. But yours consists
In dissipating thought. Happy you are
Merely because you're not unhappy. In
The hour, (and times there are when sad reflection
Will assert her right, and retrospective
Look on every murdered moment:) how does
Each view a barbed arrow plunge into
Your breast? How turns your sickening soul with anguish
Struck, and shudders at itself? With him, whose
Brow bore Israel's sacred diadem you say,
" All! All is vanity! This world's a world
" Of pain, of grief, of misery! Better,
" Far better were it not to be, than be
" Where nought of happiness is ever found."
O! knew you but the blissful life he leads,
Knew you the exalted transports he partakes!
Who from the selfish herd far severed, dwells

Secluded in retirement's peaceful vale;
There in the gentle bosom of his wife,
More than the world to him, and he to her,
A Happiness without alloy he proves:
What wonder and amazement would o'erwhelm
Your senseless minds, to find the tree which bears
Felicity within your reach? But you,
Too proud to take advice from Him whose Name
Is WISDOM, with disdain refused the boon
He proffered, nor vouchsafed to pluck the fruit.

From me benignant Sire this pride avert,
Nor let me, (as of old the sons of light
By this sole root of every direful sin
Feel from Thy presence) dash the cup away,
Which Thy best bounty offers to my lip.
Grant me the beauteous Evė my soul approves,
My first, my only love. And teach me Lord
Duly to prize the inestimable gem
Which in her Thou will give. I ask not wealth,
A competence is all that I desire;
Enough to yield the comforts of this life,
And to the suffering child of poverty
To administer relief. The heaving sigh
Which rends her tender bosom, when the tale
Of misery she hears; the pearly tear,
Which in her azure eye an angel drowns

As the lone orphan pours his sad complaint,
No parent to protect his infant years,
No hospitable roof to shield from rain,
No downy bed to rest his wearied limbs,
No food his wasted body to renew:
The sigh, the falling drop, to me how dear!
Nor in her breast a barren pity dwells,
But swift her hand bright Charity extends
And mitigates, if not removes the pang,
And sooths the woe-worn heart. To her how sweet,
How pleasing to retrace in memory's page
The years of spotless innocence, now passed
From earth to heaven: To Him who lent returned:
Returned, well stored with every opening grace,
With every Christian virtue, which matured
In that rich clime shall to a Seraph grow.
Approving conscience makes a heart of joy,
Constant serenity of mind it gives,
Gay cheerfulness with never ceasing smile
Sits on the guiltless cheek. And these are hers,
What greater, surer source of happiness
In this imperfect state can I enjoy?
Possessed of her, shall one repining thought,
One rebel murmur of ingratitude
Burst from my thankless bosom? On my brow
Shall baleful discontent with raven wing

Her gloomy empire fix? Forbid it Lord!
Avert it gracious Parent! At Thy hand
Innumerable blessings day by day
Do I receive. Eternity is mine,
Sealed by redeeming blood. And till the hour
When death shall kindly ope the door which leads
Me to Thy presence, in her snowy arms
Compressed, O may I pass my fleeting years,
Foretasting heavenly felicity.
In constant unison our hearts shall beat
Smile shall respond to smile, and tear to tear.
While gay Prosperity our cause shall own,
And down life's silver stream we gently glide,
What an immense increase of ravishment
Each from the other shall receive! Divided
Joys shall with redoubled transport burn!
But if Adversity shall sternly frown,
And strew with thorns the rugged path we tread;
If on our fragile bark loud storms shall beat,
And boisterous tempests threaten instant wreck,
Each to the other comfort shall afford,
Each to the other consolation give.
Divided sorrow scarcely shall be felt.
That sympathy which first intwined our souls,
That sacred flame which in our bosoms burn,
With each revolving year shall higher rise.

As round the world we cast our wondering eyes,
And see our fellows sink beneath the weight
Of keen misfortune's pressure; the unmixed
Draught of misery, even to the very dregs
Deep drinking; with astonishment shall we
Enquire, " Why are their fates so different
" From ours?" The single answer is, " Because
" They tread the dreary path without a friend,
" And thwart His High Behest." And when at last
Pale sickness on her clay cold bed shall stretch
Our languid limbs; when the dread hour shall come,
In which the Great Creator shall demand
The soul He gave: the sad survivor then
Shall stay his dying partner's drooping head;
Wipe off the clammy sweat: with streaming eye,
With anguish inexpressible, behold
The feeble lamp of life more dimly gleam
Each melancholy moment: see the stream
Of vital crimson from the pallid cheek
Retreat, return, re-ebb, and flow again
Fainter, and fainter: feel the throbbing pulse
Weaker, and weaker beat: the gasping lungs
In shorter breathings every instant play:
The straining eye-ball on the other fix,
Ne'er to be moved again: the heart itself,
Late by the other's image solely warmed,

Now, chilled in death forgets it ever loved.
In a deep sigh the parting soul expires.
Can such a separation be endured?
Ah me! What torture inconceivable! What
Agony superlatively exquisite!
If thus severe the temporal loss is felt
Of a mere earthly friend, how far beyond
Imagination's boldest thought must their
Dire horrors be, who, severed from the sight
Of God, without one solitary ray
Of hope, are doomed through all eternity
To wail their days in joyless banishment.
Redeeming Saviour! Hear my last request!
As in our lives we were united, so
In our deaths let us not be disjoined. Let
This cup pass away. May the same Angel
In the self-same hour, present our kindred
Spirits at Thy Throne. May the same blessing
Be by Thee pronounced on both. One starry
Crown encircle either Temple. Our robes
Of clay, till time shall be no more put off,
Shall in one coffin rest; our arms intwined
Around each other's neck; and the same worm
That feeds on one, shall eat the other too.

NOTES.

NOTE 1, page 3. At the creation God gave Adam power over every living thing; but there is not one word from whence we can argue a permission to use them for food. The inference is directly the reverse; for in the latter part of his benediction he gives all herbs, &c. to man and beast to be unto them for meat, Gen. i. ver. 28, 29, 30. After the fall we find Abel described as a keeper of sheep, Gen. iv. ver. 2. This seems to prove that flesh was then eaten, otherwise, what motive could induce him to be at the trouble of taking care of them? For we find that he bestowed all his time upon them, and did not like his brother till the ground for a maintenance. That he did kill them is proved in the fourth verse of the same chapter, where it is said, that he brought an offering to the Lord of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. From the fat being particularly mentioned, it is probable that that alone was burned, (as was customary among the Jews) and that the lean was eaten by Abel and his family. But the first specific allowance is in Gen. ix. ver. 3 and 4, where Noah upon his coming out of the ark has a renewal of his authority over all creatures, and is told that every moving thing that liveth shall be for meat for him, even as the green herb; but the blood is forbidden. Many other prohibitions were added by the Jewish law, but they are all abrogated by the Christian dispensation. It is probable that after the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden, God gave them this permission, although it is not recorded by Moses.

Note 2, page 4. Of the motives which induced God to create man we are uninformed by revelation. Two probable conjectures, and two alone present them themselves to my mind. The first is, That man was created to supply the vacancies in heaven occasioned by the rebellion and consequent expulsion of some of the angels. This places the period of their fall a short time before the creation of man. The second is, That all the angels pass through a state of probation, and that there is a perpetual succession of creations, perpetually replenishing heaven with new inhabitants; and that therefore the creation of man is not a consequence of the fall of Satan and his associates. This places their expulsion at an indefinite period. The arguments in favor of the first hypothesis are these: God created a certain number of angels sufficient to answer all his purposes, some of whom endeavoured to shake

off his yoke; but being foiled in their attempt were driven from his presence, and from the company of the rest of the celestial spirits, lest the contagion of sin should communicate itself to them, and cause in heaven miseries proportionably greater than those it has produced on earth, as the angelic nature is superior to the human. To supply their places, God resolved to create anew angels, equal in number to those who had fallen, but determined to make trial of their merit in an inferior station, before he admitted them to the enjoyment of their full and complete happiness. No wonder therefore that the fallen spirits bore such a particular hatred to man, and were so extremely anxious to alienate him from the affection of his Maker, since his continuance in virtue and consequent translation to heaven would fill all the vacant seats there, and deprive them of every hope of pardon and restoration. The universe therefore being created for this particular purpose, when the numbers are completed, the end of its creation being answered, it will of course be destroyed. To this it may be objected, If this supposition be true, God exerted his creative power once, and then designed to lay it by for ever. This is directly contrary to the nature of the Deity who must be always employed about something. The mind of angels, and even of men is so active a principle that it cannot be idle; à fortiori, the mind of God must be eternally busy. But even if it be true, it will not render their restoration impossible, but merely more improbable; for heaven being infinite in space is capable of containing an infinite number of inhabitants, and can never be overfilled. Again, matter is eternal, and therefore the general conflagration will not destroy the universe. All bodies are composed of a number of infinitely small particles united together, which fire will disjoin, but not destroy; all therefore that the general conflagration will do is to fuse or liquify the elements, and cause them to run together in one immense mass of burning lava. Exactly the same number of particles, and quantity of matter will remain. God suffers nothing to lie useless. The final judgment being pronounced on the inhabitants of this creation, he will separate this chaos, re-arrange the elements, and a new creation will arise out of the ruins of the old one; and this in a perpetual succession through all eternity. Besides, as the universe is infinite in extent, it is a strong argument to prove that it is infinite in duration. Nor can the innumerable millions which are every moment entering into the unknown world be any objection; their numbers are still finite. Again, nothing is more common than to see wicked men wantonly injuring their neighbours and destroying their happiness, without a possibility of reaping the smallest advantage thereby. This malevolent desire of rendering others as miserable as themselves must be still more powerful in devils, and very sufficiently accounts for the pains they took to make our first parents acquainted with sin. This latter hypothesis, supposing God to be incessantly enmployed in creating beings capable of enjoying eternal felicity, certainly represents him in a much

more noble and worthy light than the former, which supposes that he merely created once, and then sunk into indolence and idleness. It is reasonable to believe that all the angels underwent a trial under the infirmities of the flesh. It is certain that we undergo such a trial; and does not the doctrine that God tries some before he admits them into heaven, and not others, seem to charge him with partiality and caprice, especially when we recollect that there are different degrees of glory and happiness among them, which in justice ought to be bestowed according to their different degrees of merit. As a philosopher I adopt the latter opinion, but as a poet I have followed Milton in the former. They neither of them go beyond mere conjecture, and cannot in the least interfere with any of the Christian doctrines.

Note 3, page 6. Many learned men have supposed Eden to be merely allegorical of the happiness of the mind of man in his state of innocence, and his expulsion from it the loss of an approving conscience, necessarily consequent upon his transgressing the commandment of his Creator. But what are we to do with the rivers and countries with which it was bounded? It was certainly local, and situated in Asia; but in what part, has been matter of dispute among the commentators. Before the fall the world enjoyed a perpetual spring, and produced every thing spontaneously. The spot in which Adam was placed was probably that of all others the most adorned with all the beauties of nature; but it certainly was not walled in, or separated from the rest of the world, otherwise when the human race increased they could not get out to people the remainder of the globe, and it could not be the intention of God that any part of it should remain uninhabited. What then is meant by the expulsion of our first parents from Eden? I answer thus; immediately upon their having sinned, God cursed the ground. A change instantly took place in the air and soil; the earth required to be tilled; thorns and thistles, and all kinds of weeds sprung up; and it became subject to a vicissitude of seasons. The animals began to prey upon one another; and men were frequently put in fear of their lives. This change equally took place in Eden. The expulsion from it therefore did not consist in Adam and Eve being turned out of it; but in those things which rendered it so peculiarly delightful being taken away from it.

Note 4, page 8. Our Bible renders it, "Thou shalt surely die." This certainly is a mistake, for our first parents did not die immediately upon their eating the forbidden fruit. I take the sentence to have been, "Thou shalt become liable to death." From death being held out to them as a punishment it seems obvious that they were not subject to it by nature, and Enoch and Elias being translated to heaven as a reward for their extraordinary piety strongly proves that had we continued innocent we

should have changed our state by translation, and been spared the pain and dread of dying. In many parts of scripture God speaks of a thing which he has determined to do, as if it was already done; and this perhaps may justify the expression. Death is likewise used in another sense, equally applicable in the present case as the common signification, "Eternal punishment," "Banishment from God's presence." Which last was the immediate consequence of their transgression.

Note 5, page 8. Eve was created equal to Adam. The reason why men were invested with authority over women, is expressly because the woman took the lead in sin, Gen. iii. ver. 13. I merely mention this because Milton considers Eve as originally created inferior. So great a man dispensing with truth to accommodate his Muse, is I trust a sufficient apology for my taking the same liberty in the case mentioned in note 2.

Note 6, page 9. In the Ancient Universal History, vol. I. page 44, folio edition, a very ingenious reason is assigned why Eve was created out of a rib in preference to any other part of the body. The rib being in the middle denoted equality. Had she been taken from the head, it would have denoted superiority; if from the feet or legs, inferiority. The reason why she was formed out of Adam is evidently this; being his own flesh he would love her more tenderly than if she had been taken from any thing else.

Note 7, page 12. I am well aware of our Saviour's answer to the Sadducee's question, that the angels are of no sex, neither do they marry or are given in marriage, St. Matt. xxii. ver. 23. But yet we shall not forget in heaven our friendships formed upon earth. The remembrance of the pleasure we received here from virtuous love will afford us additional happiness hereafter. Those persons to whom we were bound by the tenderest ties of affection will therefore still continue greater sources of happiness to us than the rest of the celestial spirits; and we love, and ever shall love every thing exactly in proportion to the degree of pleasure we derive from it. I shall discuss this subject more fully in a subsequent note.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.